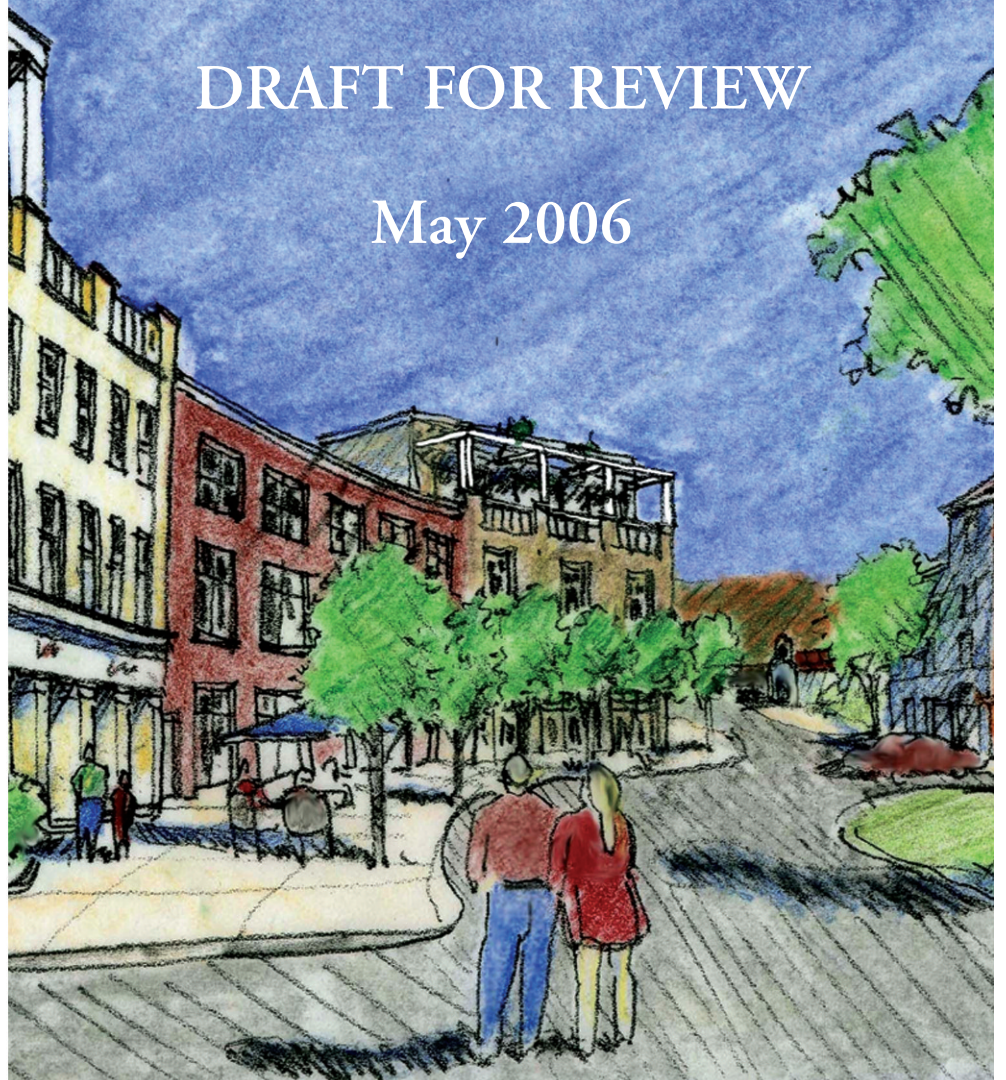


VOLCANO HEIGHTS SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

May 2006



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Prepared for the City of Albuquerque

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- Unser 6 Lane without BRT
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Purpose and Authority

City legislation has guided the planning process for Volcano Heights.

On October 4, 2004 the City Council initiated the planning work by calling for a study of the Volcano Cliffs Plan Area (now called “Volcano Heights”) to be completed in six months and instituting a moratorium on development (Bill No. R-04-145, Enactment No. R-2004-115). Finding that “The Volcanic Escarpment of the Northwest Mesa has long been considered a unique landscape that requires special protection” the Council expressed concerns over development trends with subdivisions being approved piecemeal without the guidance of an overall plan for the area.

The Council saw the need for a plan that would bring development in line with the *West Side Strategic Plan*, the *Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan*, the *Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan*, and other previously established policies such as Executive Communication EC-35. Issues to be addressed included transportation, drainage, water and wastewater, land uses, view corridors, building height, massing and orientation, walls, parks, trails and open space, and phasing and timing of growth.

Six months later on April 4, 2005 the Council received the *Volcano Heights Planning Study* report (Bill No. R-05-263, Enactment No. R-2005-052) as a foundation and guide to continue the planning and implementation process under a moratorium for a year. On March 6, 2006 (Bill No. R-06-44, Enactment No. R-2006-025) the Council extended the moratorium and set hearing dates for the Plan. In the meantime and throughout the planning process, subdivisions already in the City’s development approval process exempted from the moratorium (including Vista Vieja and Longford) were reviewed to bring design more closely in line with adopted and recommended policies.

The *Volcano Heights Planning Study* forecasts over 100,000 additional residents in the Plan Area and adjoining areas on the Northwest Mesa. The Study identified several issues to be addressed through further planning: jobs/ housing imbalances caused by build-out with single-family subdivisions; anticipated traffic congestion and burden on West Side transportation systems; need for transit-supportive densities and design; need for consolidation and connection of open space and trails along drainage channels; and retaining access to exceptional views.

Given the development pressures the area now is experiencing, a plan guiding development in the area is long overdue. The goal of this process is a plan that results in more sustainable development benefiting property owners, West Side residents and the larger community.

The Volcano Heights Planning Management Team included the City Council Office as well as the City Planning Department.